

The Foundation of Constantinople 271

it suffered unworthy mutilation. The head of Apollo was removed and replaced by a head of Constantine. This may be interpreted as a confession of the sculptors of the day that they were unable to produce a statue worthy of their great Emperor; but the fact that a statue of Apollo was chosen for this doubtful honour of mutilation is worth at least passing remark, when we remember that before his conversion Constantine had selected Apollo for special reverence. It is certainly strange that the first Christian Emperor should have been willing to be represented, on the site which was ever afterwards to be associated with his name, by a statue round which clustered so many pagan associations. He did not even disdain the pagan inscription, " To Constantine shining like the Sun " ; nor did he reject the pagan attribute of a radiated crown around the head. In the right hand of Apollo the old Greek artist had placed a lance; in the left a globe. That globe was now surmounted by a cross and lo! Apollo had become Constantine ; the most radiant of the gods of Olympus had become the champion of Christ upon earth. The fate of this statue—which was held in such superstitious reverence that for centuries all horsemen dismounted before passing it, while below it, on every first day of September, Emperor, Patriarch, and clergy assembled to chant hymns of prayer and praise—may be briefly told. In 477 the globe was thrown down by an earthquake. The lance suffered a like fate in 541, while the statue itself came crashing to earth in 1105, killing a number of persons in its fall.' The column was then surmounted by a cross, and fire and